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CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

Written statement* submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[15 January 2002]

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*This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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ENG

1 – Today, a major concern of the world community is the issue of violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms that are particularly committed by governments or governing regimes against their own citizens, and finding ways and solutions to guarantee the rights of. From one part, in today's society, thanks to the formation of the United Nations after the end of World War II and based on the United Nations Charter, a collection of rights has been defined and accepted regardless of the difference in governing regimes which binds them to adhere and respect these fundamental human rights. From the other part, human rights has a special place in all of religions, in particular Islam; and if we look at the teachings and preaching of all the religions in a general way we'll see that they have an effective role in promoting natural rights on which today's human rights are based on. The dignity of human being is something emphasized by the religions and all endeavours of prophets and religious thinkers have been focused on this fact the human values and ethics should be developed and have a done a great deal in the process of realization of human rights (in interactions of individual with him- or herself, with nature, with society, with government and with global atmosphere).

2 –The development of laws, institutions and procedures concerning the protection of human rights in current times with the expansion of NGOs that are active in human rights, have a neck-to-neck connection. Most of the declarations and resolutions concerning human rights emphasize on the significance of the role of NGOs and their effectiveness. NGOs, as human rights defenders, by providing information and recommendations, proposals and discussions, have contributed a lot to the realization and defence of human rights. The NGOs' role in the support and development of human rights should be considered in two ways: 1. as pressure groups to the governments of their own countries, or by presenting information at the international level that expose the facts and cases of violations of human rights to monitoring systems; 2. advocacy and training activities, campaigns and events for the purpose of promoting human rights and encouraging the States to ratify international instruments for the improvement of the human rights situation. The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence tries to pay attention to the role that it can play as a non-governmental organization and gives an increased significance to the freedom of expression.

3 – This organization in its short history - full of ups and downs, has been able to play an effective role in the realization of the human rights of Iranian citizens, and it has also had worked hard for monitoring human rights violations in the different countries and also in Iran. With attention to the reasons and objectives of its establishment, and with a belief that violence should be eliminated and by observing the fact that the best defence against violence is by preventing it, this organization firmly believes that people should live in a society where all their rights are observed so that violence does not take place. Therefore, the significance of the primary activities of the organization is firmly based on the move towards the realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

4 – Throughout the year 2001, there were certain violations of human rights that have been occurred while also at the same time there were certain improvements which should be encouraged and welcomed. Some of the most significant cases can be summarized as the arrests of political and press activists, the closure of publications and the method of their prosecution, the arrest of one of the deputies of the Parliament. The ODVV has issued certain statements on these cases and has reminded the related authorities about the obligations of Iranian government under the international human rights law. Also, some of the main issues that were pleasing and welcomed by the civil society have been certain reforms that are happening or taking shape in the different levels of the civil society such as the NGOs activities (which are now encouraged by the Ministry of Interior), Parliament activities for promoting human rights and establishing of expertise commission for reviewing the violations of human rights, as well as certain legal reforms. The ODVV believes that the women's active participation should be encouraged in the economic and political development of the country; legal reforms in the judiciary should be continued on a bigger scale; the implementation of the Constitution should be at the top priority

of the government (at executive, legislative and judicial levels) and freedom of expression and press should be respected and fully realized.